

the flood. I also hope that it will record the tremendous efforts made by many North Dakotans to survive and to rise to the occasion with heroic feats.

Now that a few months have passed since the waters have subsided, it is time to reflect back on some of the many heroes—people that stepped up when their community needed them—whose efforts shined despite the rising waters.

In a disaster the extreme importance of a communication system is pivotal in fighting back and preserving the safety of those in the area. Today, I would like to recognize the efforts of several US West Communications employees who worked tirelessly to maintain critical telephone service to the Grand Forks area throughout the flooding.

On April 19, 1997 a crew of nine central office technicians barricaded themselves into the US West building in the heart of Grand Forks to keep the communication systems of the area up and running during the disaster. The extensive preventive work that the US West workers completed to get ready for the flooding would now be tested as their building was surrounded by 4 feet of water, and sat just one block away from a raging fire. The work of these men and women sustained phone service to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Aviation Administration, State and local emergency workers, and so many others in the flooded region.

To give you an idea of the challenges facing these workers, they labored night and day to keep the wires dry as 26 inches of water threatened basement cables. Sustained by the food, clothing, and cots delivered via boat by the National Guard, these folks stayed on as the area was evacuated by all other people. In light of this adversity—and armed with high-volume pumps, drying machines, and sandbags—these courageous people sustained service to 50,000 area customers and hundreds of emergency workers.

I would like to recognize these heroes by name for their dedicated service is appreciated by me and many others touched by their efforts. The members of the initial emergency team were: Denny Braaten, Linda Potucek, Larry McNamara, Bob Schrader, Dan Kaiser, Dale Andrews, Glenda Wiess, Rick Hokenson, and Lew Ellingson.

Two days later, US West reinforcements arrived to provide additional support and hard work. I would like to recognize these workers now: Don Jordan, Ray Jacobsen, Tim Kennedy, Roger Jones, Bruce Bengston, Gary Boser, Jim Falconer, Bion McNulty, Jack Olson, and Tim Rogers.

I am tremendously proud of the courage and dedicated service demonstrated by the US West employees in Grand Forks. They, along with so many others who volunteered and continue the rebuilding efforts today, exemplify the North Dakota spirit.●

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill that the Senate passed yesterday provides the National Institutes of Health and other Government health initiatives with funding needed to continue their work on diseases that afflict so many millions of Americans. I am glad to see that this budget will continue to place a priority on health research and, in particular on women's health. Although we have seen many advances in women's health over the past several years, much more progress needs to be made especially on such intractable problems as breast cancer.

The key to successful breast cancer treatment is early detection. Mammography has been and will continue to be a key diagnostic tool in early detection for women in the high-risk category for breast cancer. Digital mammography is the next generation technology in mammography imaging for cancer, and it offers a number of advantages over the current film technology, including: improved image quality and diagnosis; improved lesion visualization; lower overall cost of image storage and retrieval; and increased use of tele-mammography as a means to facilitate expert consultations.

There is a second generation digital mammography technology on the drawing boards that offers the prospect not only of improving the ability of radiologists to identify lesions in the breast, but also of significantly reducing the cost of digital mammography. One such approach, a Metal-Halide technology, holds out the promise of meeting these goals. This technology has the potential to result in an imager that could be used to replace the film imagers in existing mammography machines—rather than needing to replace the entire mammography machine.

There are significant technical hurdles that must be overcome before a product of the necessary quality of resolution for mammography can be introduced. The research and development risk may be too great for private sector companies to move forward, thus making it ideal for a Government-industry partnership.

I urge the administration to consider addressing this issue in its fiscal year 1999 budget by creating a program that would focus on key technologies that could improve women's health. This new program could place particular emphasis on technologies that will make a significant difference for women, have a high likelihood of near-term commercial development, and are likely to see widespread and rapid diffusion throughout the medical community.

Mr. President, the war on breast cancer and many other diseases has not been won. In the private and public sectors, we must be creative in looking for new approaches to address and over-

come these challenges. It does little good if we make a breakthrough in the lab or corporate research facility, if we can't bring that breakthrough to market in such a way that the maximum number of people benefit. I hope the administration will give careful consideration to these kinds of new and innovative ideas in crafting its budget for the upcoming fiscal year.●

TRIBUTE TO DAN VECE, SR.

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, within every town in the country, there are a small handful of families or individuals whose achievements and contributions to their community are so extraordinary that they become as much a part of the town's landscape as Main Street, the Court House, or City Hall. The Vece's are such a family in the town of Clinton, CT.

For decades, Vece family members have been on town boards and commissions, working on countless charity and civic events. The Vece family's contributions to town life were even honored in 1995, when the Pierson School gazebo was renamed the Vece Gazebo. But the greatest illustration of what this family meant to the vitality of this small New England shometown could be seen once a week at a local restaurant. Each Sunday from 4 to 8 p.m. for the past 16 years, a diverse group of patrons would gather at Bill's Seafood Restaurant to enjoy the music of Clinton's favorite band. The people of Clinton loved coming out and singing the songs that they all knew, but what they loved most was the band's leader—Dan Vece, Sr. What set Mr. Vece apart from other bandleaders was not the great musical skill with which he played the banjo. What made Dan Vece so special was his zest for life. That, and the fact that he was over 100 years old.

Seeing Dan Vece on stage wearing his trademark sailor's cap and picking at his 1919 Gibson banjo, served to remind countless people that life was meant to be enjoyed. He served as an inspiration to anyone who was fortunate enough to meet him. Sadly, on September 23, 1997, Dan Vece, Sr. died at the age of 101.

Dan Vece, Sr. grew up and lived in New Haven, CT until he enlisted in the Army during World War I. After being discharged from the Army, he returned to New Haven where he married his wife of 68 years, Tilly Tullo. Together they moved to Clinton in 1919, where they operated a retail plumbing store and service. In addition to his business, Mr. Vece was one of Clinton's first police officers and served as a fireman, beginning the longstanding family tradition of public service. Mr. Vece enjoyed working and didn't retire until he was 80 years old, and he continued doing odd jobs until he was 88. He played golf until he was 96, and drove a car until he was 98, transporting senior women to the grocery store. Dan Vece was involved in countless activities, but his true passion was always his music.